

feared to stake his prestige on forcing the Republican votes of the House into a defense of the Act. As early as June, 1808, he had written to Dr. Leib: "They [the extreme Federalists] are endeavoring to convince England that we suffer more by the embargo than they do, and that, if they will hold out a while, we must abandon it. It is true, the time will come when we must abandon it. But if this is before the repeal of the Orders of Council, we must abandon it only for a state of war. The day is not distant when that will be preferable to a longer continuance of the embargo. But we can never remove that, and let our vessels go out and be taken under these orders without making reprisals." He left Congress at liberty to do what it would. After three and a half months of debate, modifications so extensive were passed as to amount to a virtual repeal of the Embargo Act. Most of these modifications were to take effect on March 1st, 1809. Jefferson signed the bill embracing them three days before going out of office. He protested to the last that the Embargo, if it had been steadfastly adhered to, would have accomplished its purpose, and American shipping would have been restored to its rights without war.

Jefferson's embarrassment over the Embargo was accompanied by annoyance at jealousies within his party. He was the undisputed leader, a title which meant far more than being merely an official head. He had long since made his choice of a successor. This was well understood; and in January, 1808, his partisans in the Virginia Legislature held a caucus and named Madison as their choice for the next President. Following this example, a Congressional caucus was held, and again Madison was named; but many Republican Senators and Representatives held aloof. Madison, in the minds of these latter, was inseparably associated with Hamilton as an author of the Federalist; and this idea was encouraged by Randolph and his immediate followers, who, as we have seen, had been pushing Monroe as their opposition candidate. George Clinton, though named by Madison's supporters as the candidate for Vice-President, had also become sullen at Madison's elevation over him. In the midst of these unseemly but inevitable quar-